

## REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request that the rejected claims be reconsidered and again examined.

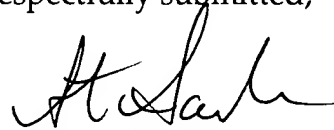
The action rejected claims 1-19 as being anticipated by the disclosure of U.S. patent number 4,429,856 ("Jackson"). More specifically, claim 1 defines a valve having, among other things, a stem in a valve body. The stem has an aperture that is configured so that when engaged with an instrument, it deforms to allow liquid to flow therethrough to or from the instrument.

Jackson neither discloses nor suggests such an apparatus. In particular, The applicant cannot see where Jackson discloses an aperture that deforms in the manner required by the claim. Instead, Jackson shows a valve having a valve element 34 (within a valve body 32) that has a transverse passage 62. Unlike the invention as claimed by claim 1, the transverse passage 62 does not appear to deform. Moreover, transverse passage deformation does not appear to be necessary to provide the intended function. Specifically, as shown in figure 4, the passage 62 appears to permit fluid to flow from a nozzle inserted into the valve body 32 without deforming. Without the passage 62, the top surface of the valve element 34 may occlude fluid flow from the nozzle. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable in view of Jackson.

Dependent claims 2-12 all depend from claim 1 and thus, are allowable for the same reasons. In a similar manner, independent claim 13 also defines a valve having a stem with an aperture that deforms to allow liquid to flow therethrough to or from an instrument. Accordingly, independent claim 13 also is allowable for the same reasons as discussed above with regard to claim 1. Moreover, dependent claims 14-19 all depend from claim 13 and thus, are allowable for the same reasons.

The application thus is in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. Applicants request that the Examiner contact the undersigned, Steven Saunders, if it will assist examination of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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